



## April 2016

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## RMF Quick Link



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## From our President Get Your PhD on the Riverbank

Wil Huett

I think I am one of the few folks still hanging around who date back to the founding days of Rocky Mountain Flycasters. Over the years I have participated in a fair number of field projects. Sometimes we call those 'rock rolling' projects, or 'boots on the ground' projects.

My gray-beard status means I have wielded a shovel and pick, I have carried the butt end of logs and dropped them in streams to form plunge pools, I have pounded nails, and levered rocks, but what I remember most is planting willows.

Sometimes, as fishers, we curse willows. Didn't someone write a poem, "Willows, willows, everywhere, and not a place to cast"? But willows play an important role in stream ecology. Especially during high water periods. So, I have planted willows when a restoration plan calls for it.

I can still drive sections of the lower Thompson canyon and spy willows I believe I planted. There are willows I helped plant last spring doing a nice job of rooting up in Skin Gulch. In fact, I think I have earned my PhD in willow planting. PhD meaning 'Plant here and Deeper'!

Will you join me in our upcoming field season and start earning credits toward your PhD?

As a fitting kickoff to the season of fishing fun and conservation PhD's, April is shaping up as a month of celebrating things wet and fishy. Check the calendar for details, but we have Hank Patterson bringing one of his entertaining fishing films to the Lincoln Center on the 13th, a friends and family oriented Fly Fishing Day at Odell's Taproom on **Sunday the 17th**, and our regular meeting on **Wednesday the 20th** featuring "Big Trout" Joe Butler, author, guide, world record holder and fishing raconteur.

At each of those events you can learn more about upcoming conservation projects in both of our home rivers and can sign up to start earning your Riverbank PhD.

Let's get our feet wet together,

Wil

P.S. One other thing I want to mention, don't miss Robin Brown's essay in



Wil Huett,  
RMG President and TU  
Lifetime Member

this issue. Some of you may know Robin as a TU life member and accomplished angler, but may have missed her facility with the English language. Whatever you do, don't miss her last line. Well done Robin, wish I had said that.

Wil Huett, President  
Rocky Mountain Flycasters

## Chapter Event Calendar



## Filling up the Calendar

Our calendar pages are some of the most frequently visited on our web site. Wouldn't it be great to see your own pictures displayed there? There are many opportunities for months into the future. Pictures that are well-lit, in focus, on TU topic, and a minimum of 530 pixels wide and 400 pixel in height. Send a copy of fishing or conservation-related pictures to:

Paul Wehr, Webmaster



## April Program Meeting



Joe Butler and a "Big Fish"

Joe Butler, our speaker for the April 20 meeting, started fishing at an early age and was intrigued and fascinated with the pursuit of big fish. He has gathered knowledge over the past years from many great fly fishers and today shares that knowledge with anyone that wants to learn. Joe has spoken at hundreds of seminars, clinics, programs, trips and organizations such as Trout Unlimited and the Federation of Fly Fishers.

Joe has made the hunt for trophy fish a passion. He held the world record for a brown trout on a fly rod for 20 years - a 27 lbs. 3 oz monster. He also holds the world record for a kokanee salmon on a fly and is in the Fly Fishing Hall of Fame. He has written six books on fishing including "Big Trout on Flies".

If you want to learn how to find, catch and land huge fish you'll want to hear what Joe Butler has to say or, better yet, join him on one of his hosted trips to catch trophy fish. Joe has hosted trips all over the United States for the past 20 years so you know you'll be working with a seasoned professional.

At the **April 20** meeting Joe will share ideas about catching big fish as well as describe some of the dangers in pursuing them and other species in the great outdoors.

As always, social hour begins at 6:30 pm at the Fort Collins Senior Center, and the program follows at 7:00 pm. Admission is free and the public is welcome. The Fort Collins Senior Center is located at 1200 Raintree Drive off Shields Avenue between Prospect and Drake.



## From the Editor

When I began editing *The Flypaper* two years ago, I looked to chapter leaders, members and supporters for guidance about focus and content. A large e-survey, conducted about the same time, revealed that a majority of you wanted RMF to support fishing and conservation in equal amounts. So, I assumed you also wanted *The Flypaper* to represent this balance and have pursued that goal over the past two years. All issues have not achieved this balance; our content is determined by the submissions we receive. However, achieving a fishing/conservation balance remains a guiding editorial principle.

As I begin a second “tour of duty” with *The Flypaper* I want to “take your pulse” again about your preferred fishing/conservation emphasis, but this time more directly. Rather than soliciting your views about preferred focus of the chapter I want to know your current preferences about newsletter content. To help with this all you need to do is answer two questions by clicking on the link below. The results will be posted in the May issue of *The Flypaper*.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WZHB883>

Many thanks for your your continuing support of RMF and *The Flypaper*! Because of you our newsletter has again been awarded the national All-Star distinction by Constant Contact, our online service provider.



Dr. Bob Green, *Continuing Flypaper* Editor



## The Passion Of Fly Fishing

An Essay by Robin C. Brown,  
FFF Certified Flycaster



Robin Brown, Lifetime Member, Trout Unlimited

What is it about a stream and trout that captures our spirit and imagination? I know when I am headed toward a stream, my hands get clammy and my heart starts to race. Even the night before I have trouble sleeping as the adrenaline rush begins and thoughts of rainbows tugging on my line race across my mind, over and over!

The old go-to rivers create the same excitement as new rivers. That sense of familiarity, knowing where the trout lie, and knowing the hatches provides that reassurance of catching trout. Yet, a new stream is a challenge, an opportunity to test yourself against the best of what nature has to offer. It offers a chance to test your skills and knowledge in regard to reading rivers, assessing bugs, determining technique. Fly fishing a new river can be frustrating, but when you get the chance to set the hook, all is right in the world again.

If I lack a particular ability on the river, it is not taking the time to just enjoy where I am at that moment. I can become so fixated on finding and catching trout that the beauty of the place can escape me. That just makes me yearn to go again to those amazing places like hiking the Gill Trail into Cheesman Canyon; standing in the San



Juan River and just breathing; floating the Grey Reef, appreciating such an incredible and productive river in the middle of wind, bramble bushes, and dry grass, and finding solace and space on the Poudre River.

I think what brings me back again and again to fly fishing is that I never stop learning. This is an endeavor, a passion which just keeps on giving. And once that passion grabs you, it becomes your life blood, that experience that provides balance and joy and challenge to your existence.

I hope with all my heart that our citizenry will become wiser and more vocal, and choose to stand up and fight for our rivers and cold-water trout. Nothing could be more selfish than denying future generations the pure joy we now experience through fly fishing.



## April Conservation Notes

Odell Brewing Company will be holding its second annual Fly Fishing Party on **April 17 from 11 AM to 6 PM** for a great day of fly-fishing-related activities. Among those activities will be opportunities to learn about the on-stream and riparian ecological restoration projects that are ongoing in the Big Thompson and Cache La Poudre watersheds. You and your friends will be able to register as volunteers for those projects right at the Rocky Mountain Flycasters booth at this Fly Fishing Party. For a quick look at near-term volunteer opportunities, go to the April calendar page at [www.rockymtnflycasters.org](http://www.rockymtnflycasters.org).



Dave Piske, Conservation Chair

U.S. Highway 34 permanent repairs in the Big Thompson canyon will begin this summer. To learn what and where the construction will be, go to the public meetings that will take place on **April 11** in Estes Park's Town Hall, or on **April 12** at the Big Thompson Elementary School at 7702 W. Highway 34 just west of Loveland. Meetings will be from 6 PM until 8 PM each day. Each meeting will have a formal presentation followed by a Q & A session addressing:

- Drake to Loveland construction plans
- Big Thompson River Coalition work
- Project timeline
- Map of construction
- Construction schedule/phasing
- Traffic impacts

To contact me about any of our conservation projects [conserve@rockymtnflycasters.org](mailto:conserve@rockymtnflycasters.org).

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## Adopt-a-Trail News

Our first Adopt-a-Trail project with the Fort Collins Natural Areas Dept. will take place at Shields Ponds (where Shields Rd crosses the Poudre River) on Saturday, **April 30th**, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Our work will involve the surfacing of a new trail near the Shields Ponds parking lot. We hope to have a dozen TU members present. Bring gloves, hat and sunscreen. All tools, materials, water, and LUNCH will be provided. RSVP to Dave



Dave Morse, Adopt-a-Trail



Morse ([dgmorse45@gmail.com](mailto:dgmorse45@gmail.com)) so we can get an accurate lunch count. Bring your rod and waders to fish this attractive section of the Poudre after lunch. See you there! Thanks.

--Dave Morse, *Adopt-a-Trail Coordinator*



## From Our Youth Outreach Coordinator



Dennis Cook, *Youth Outreach Coordinator*

### CSU “5 Rivers” TU Fly Fishing Club

After three attempts in recent years, our efforts to support CSU students have finally succeeded. In early March the group received official CSU approval as a Registered Student Organization. CSU joins a network of over 50 college campus 5 Rivers TU-affiliated clubs across the U.S. There is a strong presence in Colorado, the southeast and mid-Atlantic regions. In the next three years TU hopes to have over 150 clubs around the country.

5 Rivers Clubs promote fly fishing as a form of outdoor recreation by bringing together students to learn about the arts of fly fishing and to develop a conservation ethic. The clubs teach students fly casting and fly tying, and provide volunteer stream conservation activities on the members’ home waters. Members also

have an opportunity to join a sponsoring chapter, lend a young voice and help shape the TU of tomorrow.

Ben Bradfield, a CSU junior, has been fly fishing for 2 years since his freshman year. He is a geology major from Steamboat Springs, CO. Jacob Pitt is from Kansas City, Kansas, and is a sophomore majoring in ecosystem science and sustainability. His father got him started fly fishing several years ago and he has been “hooked” ever since. Connor Murphy is a Fort Collins native known to many of us in the sport, and has been fly fishing and fly tying for most of his young life. He works as a shop employee/guide/instructor at St. Peters Fly Shop and is also a Montana Fly Company fly designer, FFF certified casting instructor and a long standing exhibition fly tier. He is a junior at CSU, majoring in Fish and Wildlife Conservation Biology.

By getting all of the administrative trapping in place and attracting a nucleus of student members, leaders Jacob Pitt, Connor Murphy and Ben Bradshaw believe they can be more effective launching a successful recruitment campaign when they return to campus in August. Five members will be joining Jacob and Connor attending the TU Western Regional Rendezvous this April 8-10 being held at Meredith, Colorado. About 200 students from other clubs are expected, and our CSU leaders will learn about other clubs successes, as well as have some great experiences fishing the Roaring Fork and Frying Pan Rivers.

The leaders are already planning a CSU casting instructional activity later this month, and possibly also an on-water activity, before finals and the May 13th term end and everybody heads homeward.



Ben Bradshaw, Jacob Pitt and Connor Murphy

## CSU Undergraduate Internship

Many members are aware that our Rocky Mountain Flycasters Chapter has for many years supported coldwater research and education through the Behnke-RMF Graduate Research Fellowship at the Colorado State University Fisheries Program...and that the Fellowship became fully funded by the Behnke Family.

In February, our Rocky Mountain Flycasters Chapter formalized a new agreement with the Colorado State University Department of Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Biology that also establishes a new Undergraduate Internship for a student in the Fisheries & Aquatic Sciences studies curriculum. This internship provides the student an opportunity to obtain a minimum of 160 hours of hands-on, science-based conservation and outreach experience applicable toward their degree. This is also beneficial to our Trout Unlimited chapter's conservation mission and goals, and the RMF internship will provide a small stipend of \$500 annually to the selected student.

This Internship will be open to sophomores, juniors or seniors, and selection will be based on demonstrated commitment to fisheries ecology and conservation, and academic standing. Interns will be selected by a committee of CSU Fisheries faculty and RMF leadership, and awards will be announced each spring with the work occurring during the upcoming summer and academic year.

Our RMF Chapter Board and Leadership Team believe this Undergraduate Internship provides a formal opportunity for an undergraduate fisheries student to contribute to our Chapter goals while learning about trout conservation and Trout Unlimited, and also strengthens ties between RMF and the CSU fisheries and aquatic sciences program.

## Youth Day Camp

The 2016 "Application & Parents Information Packet" was posted to the RMF Chapter website on April 1st and can be accessed for download at <http://nocotu.org/S/youthcamp>. Completed Application Packets are now being accepted. No previous fly fishing experience is required.

Applications are evaluated with consideration of a one page description the applicant provides of his/her natural outdoors interests and experiences, and reasons for applying for the 2016 camp.

The Day Camp program is designed for 15 campers (ages 14-17) and we expect that all openings will again be filled. The daily schedule is from 8:00 am to 6:00/7:00 pm. All equipment, transportation between activity venues, and drinking water will be provided. Campers will bring lunches, rain gear, and appropriate clothing. Daily drop-off/pick-up locations for parents are included with the pre-announced daily camp schedule several weeks before camp begins.

The Day Camp is a fast paced six days of instruction, participation, and great fun. Campers learn how to fly fish, and also about responsibility for the watersheds, riparian habitat, river ecology, and the trout. Other topics include fly fishing equipment, knots, regulations, water safety, local and regional conservation issues, invasive species, entomology, trout anatomy and behavior, and casting and line control.

Time on the water includes learning to read the water, electro-stunning and identifying fish, chasing finicky hungry trout on the Poudre River and in Rocky Mountain National Park, and a hands-on conservation project, as well as casting to eager bass on still-water ponds. Other days campers capture aquatic insects and learn how to tie flies that imitate them to fool more fish, and also snorkeling to observe underwater habitat and behaviors. We look forward to having another great group of campers, just as in previous years.





## Let's Go Fishing 2016

Listed below are some trips we hope to take in 2016. Sign-up at our monthly meeting. Or sign up on line on our chapter website.

We have quite a mix of fishing destinations for 2016. Hopefully there is something for you on this list. In March we went after big rainbows at Gray Reef and were successful! Take time to read view the summary video, Ben Zomer's narrative summary of the trip and some great pictures of participants and fish.

We plan to again go after big rainbows in June near Laramie at Twin Buttes. June and July will also bring a chance to catch grayling and cutthroats in two beautiful high country lakes. Dennis will again host a fun-filled day of small stream fishing with dry flies on the Colo River headwaters in RMNP. September and October will take us to some water that most people have not fished - the Yampa River at Steamboat Springs, and the Frying Pan and Roaring Fork rivers near Glenwood Springs. We hope you will join us for all the fun!

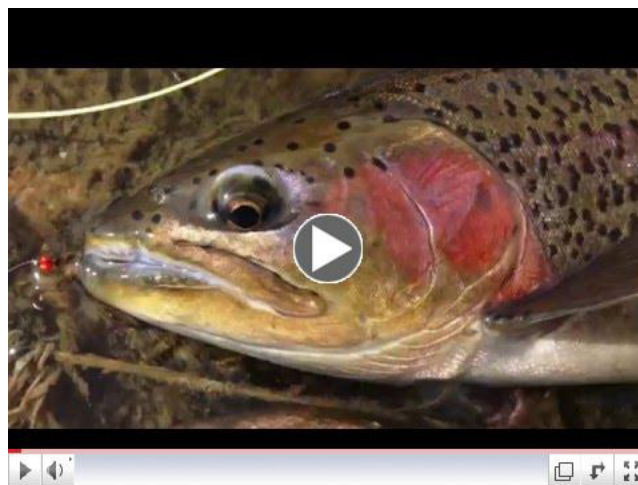


Mark Miller, Let's Go Fishing Coordinator

- **23 April** - Poudre - Gateway area - Host: Mark Miller
- **14 May** - Big Thompson below Lake Estes - Host needed for this trip!
- **4 June** - Twin Buttes Reservoir near Laramie - Host: Frank Cada (float tubes recommended but not mandatory). Need a WY license.
- **25 June** - Joe Wright Reservoir - for Grayling - Host: Dave Morse
- **9 July** - Lake Agnes - Cutthroats (near Cameron Pass) - Host: Dave Morse
- **20 August** - RMNP Colorado Headwaters - Host: Dennis Cook
- **16-18 September** - Yampa Tailwater - Host: Dennis Cook
- early Oct - Frying Pan/Roaring Fork- date to be determined - Host: Ben Zomer

Questions? Contact: Email [Mark Miller](#) at or call 970-744-8229 (cell).

## Rock Mountain Flycasters March Trip to the Reef



Check out this [1 minute preview video](#) by Mark Miller before reading any farther.

On a cold and snowy morning 7 fisherman gathered to embark on a wondrous journey in search of large, eager, rainbow trout. We started gathering as one of the group was still shoveling his driveway from the overnight snow. The road ahead was looking a little slippery, but the thought of leaping salmonids overcame the desire to get back under the covers.

We packed up our belongings and car pooled north towards famed waters. The road did provide some excitement as some of us encountered the wrong kind of fish tail on roads covered with black ice. However, through skillful driving, the trip was saved and we pushed on without incident.



David Morse

The first day of fishing proved successful with many fish netted and many lost. Domingo lost a very nice fish after a 10 minute battle on his 3 weight nymph rod. Bobby found a honey hole that landed him 5 nice rainbows from the get go. Frank figured out how deep



Coy Wylie

the fish were holding and caught a few as well. The temps were chilly and ice formed in our guides. Nobody seemed to mind since the sun was out and the fish warmed us with jumps and tugs. Three more folks showed up and we had a grand feast of brats and burgers to end a respectable day of fishing.

On day 2 after a filling breakfast, the group split up a bit and swarmed the upper section of river. Battling drift boats the fishing seemed slower. The sun was blazing, but the temperature never really warmed that much in the river corridor. While fish were caught, they seemed to be taking naps throughout the day. However, with some more exploration, Lance found a run that gave up over a dozen fish averaging 16 inches in 1 foot of water. The day passed by and came to an end much too soon and with less fish leaping than we hoped. The group converged below the dam and slightly battle fished out a few more nice tugs before calling it a day. Upon arrival to the cabin a nice pulled pork dinner was awaiting weary anglers as we de-waded and shared some stories.



Ben Zomer, Gray Reef Trip Host, Author of the Trip Narrative



Mark Miller

Our final day, the larger group decided to head to the beautiful Fremont canyon. Upon arriving the dreaded Wyoming "W" started to kick up. First with light breezes then some steady and strong gusts. Undeterred, the anglers were able to spot large fish and began offering them a various assortment of flies. Apparently, lock jaw sickness had come upon these feisty rainbows and tricking them to eat flies was quite difficult. As the day warmed, some of the fish were feeling a bit better and took our flies. Everyone there had landed at least one pre-spawn beauty among a massive midge hatch that even brought some of the beasts to the surface (they put up middle

fin while doing so as, I saw it myself). The day became later and the anglers had to drag themselves back to their cars and eventually their families, only to dream about the trout of the North Platte that they experienced and vow to return to catch again.



# Spring Trout Unlimited Raffle

Support to protect, conserve and restore Colorado's coldwater Fisheries and their watersheds

## GUNNISON "BLACK CANYON" FLOAT

Raffle Tickets: \$10.00 per ticket or \$25.00 for three tickets

Grand Prize: Two day, one night guided float fishing adventure for two in the Black Canyon of the Gunnison, plus lodging and dinner for two the night prior to your launch at Gunnison River Farms. Retail Value: \$3,050.00

For information visit [www.blackcanyonanglers.com](http://www.blackcanyonanglers.com) or call (970) 835-5050.

Raffle tickets will be available for purchase the following dates:

**April 17th** - Odell Brewing Fly Fishing Party (11:00am to 6:00pm)

**April 20th** - RMF Chapter Meeting (Fort Collins Senior Center - 7:00pm to 9:00pm)

Drawing: April 22nd, Friday 9:00pm at the Colorado TU Spring Rendezvous

Need not to be present to win.

License No. 2016-10517



## Sustaining Donors

### Rocky Mountain Flycaster Sustaining Donors



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